



CRIMPVILLE COMMENTS

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HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

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THE STUDENTS OF THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY

REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

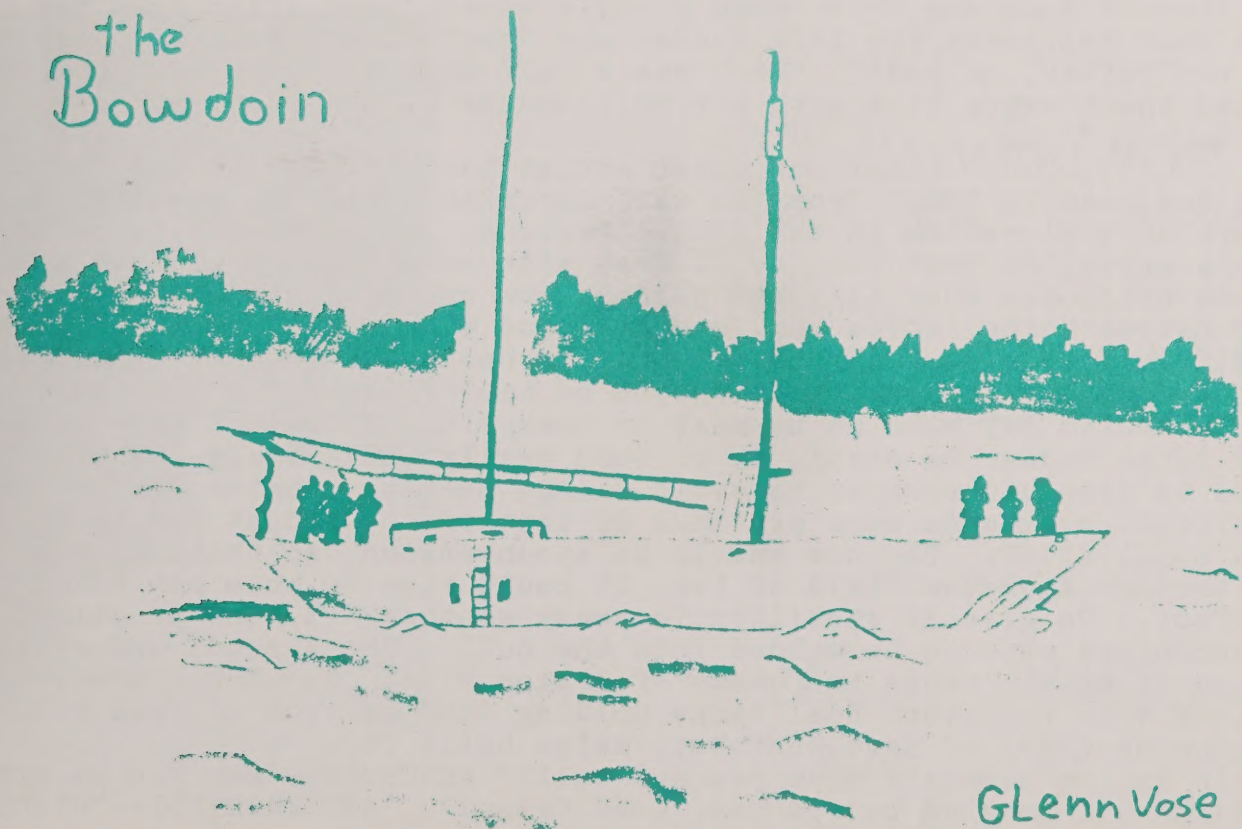


Jean Brennan
Chairman

March 1978

Rear Admiral Donald B. MacMillan was born in Provincetown, Massachusetts in 1874 and died September 7, 1970 at the age of 95. He was the last survivor of the support parties that aided Admiral Robert E. Peary to discover the North Pole in 1909. "Mac" had to turn back when within 200 miles of the Pole due to frozen feet. After that for nearly a half century he led almost yearly expeditions to the Arctic and became a very close friend of the Eskimos. Surely there are many left who still recall his exploits and followed them regularly.

The
Bowdoin



Glenn Vose

Guest Artist--Glenn Vose--Associate Commission member.

"Mac" had lost his father in a shipwreck off the Grand Banks, New Foundland and was adopted by his sister who lived "down Maine". A charming young lady who had been his classmate in school later became the wife of Dr. James P. Berkeley, a former Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Bellingham. A gift of money from the church was used by Dr. Berkeley to purchase the engagement ring for his lovely Bride to be.

Now the grandparents of our Associate Member in the Historical Commission, Glenn Vose, were personal friends of "Mac" so he interviewed his grandmother, Eunice Vose, and recorded this on tape for us to add to the tape that had been made in October of 1949 when the Mendon School Principal, Mr. Henry Clough, interviewed "Mac" directly. These historic tapes were duplicated for the history class conducted by Mr. Leo Dalpe.

"Mac" spent a lot of time with the Eskimos and found them the happiest and healthiest (at that time) people on earth. Their religion is to help each other so that if one of them is unhappy--they're all unhappy! There were about 30,000 eskimos who inhabited the longest coastline of any nation in the world. On his many trips north "Mac" would bring gifts and medicine to them on the Bowdoin.

A persistent young lady, Miriam Look, decided early in her life that some day she would be "Mrs. Donald MacMillan" and set her sights accordingly. True, she had a lot of help from Fate and in her love of the sea succeeded in achieving that goal. As the wife of this famous explorer she wrote a tremendous book, "GREEN SEAS AND WHITE ICE" that was published in 1948 of her experience sailing North with her "Captain". It is highly recommended for reading.

Miriam had a motorboat of her own that she called the "Sea Pup" and one day invited "Mac" for a ride to South Freeport, Maine where he was to lecture. But--right in the middle of Casco Bay the engine decided to quit. And when they stop--they stop. She tried all sorts of checks to determine what went wrong without success. Finally her Captain could contain himself no longer and casually inquired, "Wonder if there's any gas in the tank?" Well you guessed it--the tank was dryer than a pup's bone! Soon, along came her father's boat to rescue the fair maiden and "Mac" and, knowingly, queried, "What's the matter, no gas?" "Mac" was a half hour late for his lecture but Miriam had spent extra time with her idol and he didn't mind, either!

Now the "BOWDOIN" that our guest artist has pictured on the front page was designed by "Mac" from the vast experience that he acquired in his many years of exploration in the Arctic regions. His ship was to be small--sixty tons gross, 85 feet long by 21 feet wide so that he could jam her in a niche in the rocks when ice came piling down on her. Made of double-timbered native Maine white oak, and sheathed with a belt of Australian ironwood five feet wide, one and one-half inches thick to protect her when wedging through the ice pack. It was to be short-rigged for the heavy weather in Baffin Bay with no topmast or bowsprit. It was to have an exceptionally large rudder to enable it to turn easily and quickly. The propeller was to be deep under water to avoid damage when the engine was reversed. Two watertight bulkheads were provided so that if injured at bow or stern it would still float. The bow was to be spoon-shaped, so that, if unable to push through a broken field of ice, it could rise up on a pan and crush it underfoot. To give it stability in heavy weather, 21 tons of cement and boiler punchings were to be molded into the hull. The shrouds and stays were to be of steel, masts and booms of Oregon Pine. Two large wrecking pumps along with two steel fuel tanks holding 2200 gallons of fuel oil. The Hodgdon Brothers of East Boothbay, Maine built it.

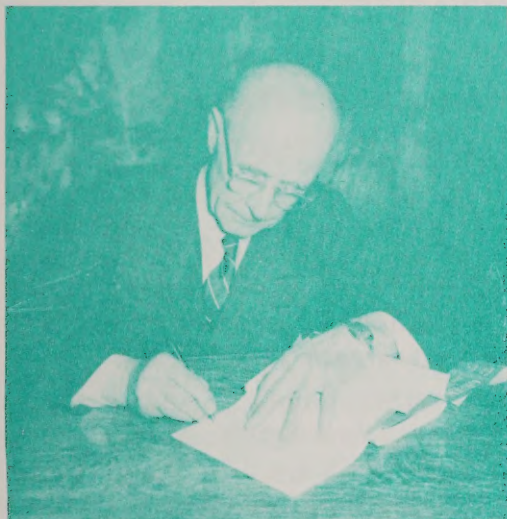
AKSUNAI in Eskimo means: "I hope you are well?" AKSUSHEE--"May you be strong" ILLITARNAMEK--"I am glad to see you, good friend". ANUVERORITSI--"Wishing the very best. May you live long and always be happy."



Oct. 25, 1949

MacMillan
interviewed by
Principal Clough
of Mendon and
recording on wire
machine.

Picture--right-->
"Mac" as he really
is--happy and
relaxed.



Jan. 18, 1949. Here's the famous couple seen
writing the autographs shown below.

Over twenty years later "Mac" took another
journey in a different ship crossing the Bar.

Donald B. MacMillan

Green Seas and White Ice

To Nick Vose

*With very best wishes
from Mac and Miriam
Aksumai! Illitarnamuk!
(The Eskimo Greeting to a good friend)
Miriam Mac Millan*



To John Lundvall,

*Aksumai! Illitarnamuk!
(Eskimo greeting to a good friend)
Miriam Mac Millan*

Indian Translation

In the "Massachusatts Historical Collections" book of 1839 we found the following translation of the Lord's Prayer in the local "Nipmuc" Indian language. Note how long the words are in most cases.

Mr. Eliot translated the whole Bible into the Natick (or Nipmuc) dialect. This Bible was printed at Cambridge, in 1663, and is the first Bible printed in America. A second edition was printed in 1685, in the correction of which Mr. Eliot received great assistance from Mr. John Cotton.* The following is the title-page: "Mamusse Wunneetupanatamwe Up BIBLUM GOD, Naneeswe NUKKONE TESTAMENT Kah Wonk WUSKU TESTAMENT."

The following is the Lord's Prayer, in the Indian tongue, contained in the above work.

Our father heaven in hallowed thy name come thy kingdom
Nushun kesukqut ; Quttianatamunach ktowesuonk ; Peyaumuutch kukketassutamoonk ;
 thy will done earth on as heaven in our food daily
Kuttenantamoonk nen nach ohkeit neane kesukqut ; Nummeetsuonqash asekesukokish
 give us this this day and forgive us our sins as
asamatinean yeuyeu kesukod ; Kah ahquontamaunnean nummatcheseongash neane
 wicked-doers we forgive them Also lead us not
matchenekuk quengig nutahquontamaunnonog ; Ahque sagkompagunaimean en
 temptation in Oh deliver us evil from for thine
qutchhuaonganit ; Wehe pohquohmuussinnean wutch match itut ; Newutche kutahtaun
 kingdom and power and glory forever Amen.
ketassutamoonk kah menukkesuonk kah sohsumoonk micheme Amer.

Guest Editor--Princess White Flower.

There is a small Indian Reservation located in Grafton, Massachusetts that is on Brigham Hill and is called Hassanamisco --meaning "a place of many small stones." They are a branch of the Nipmuc --meaning "Fresh water fishermen". The Nipmuc had about 15 to 20 bands or tribes in their Nation. The Hassanamisco territory included what is Grafton, part of Westboro, Shrewsbury, Millbury and Upton. (Where our Crimville Comments are being printed at the Vocational school that Bellingham Students attend.) Population of these areas were never great. Families settled mostly in small sections in what are now these towns. Hassanamisco was a town or plantation according to early standards and was also the ruling town. (speaking of the Hassanamisco Reservation) "Through all trials they (Indians) have somehow managed to cling to the small remnant of land, the loving Mother Earth. All the rest of the 8000 square acres of their domain have disappeared through deed and misdeeds. Promises were made, treaties were broken but always the Native lost out. Was he too passive trying to keep the peace? Or, was he just unable to cope with the problem? Possibly a little of both. He was trustful because his code was how he treated his fellowman. He had (and has) integrity and, expected the same of others. It was a great cultural shock when he discovered this to be untrue. He didn't need or want many material things. There was no keeping up with the Joneses". Princess White Flower has spoken.

(It has taken centuries to expose the lies that have been promoted and one should clearly understand that the Indians were the original Natives of this country and that our ancestors were the foreigners who stole as much as they could from them. So, now, we wonder--"who was the real savage"? Supposing that we, today, were faced with a similar situation, as the Natives did centuries ago, by the Canadians sweeping down on us with swift determination to subdue, conquer and in some cases, slaughter helpless people and drive some to barren wastelands known as "reservations" then we would know what the Spaniards, French, Dutch and English perpetrated on the Indian Natives. Let us hope that the present generation can do all possible to compensate somewhat for those deeds.)

We just learned that Albert Gardner, deceased, formerly of Mechanic street, was a cousin of Rear Admiral MacMillan. He is survived by two daughters, Eva Woodman and Myrtle Diminico and grandchildren.

Clarence Bourcier writes: "I want to thank all those involved for sending me the papers, it is nice to receive them especially when the articles are about people or places that I know. I was in the group that went to the church to see Lottie Burr married. (1918) Earl Thayer came over to the school and asked if some of the boys could go help fight fires. I remember that I went once or twice along with Lowell Collins, Leroy Moore, Alfred Brothers and maybe others also." Those were the good old days ! Boys don't get a chance anymore to help put out forest fires along side of adults to prove their manhood and ability.

This is the month that heralds SPRING once again after a hard winter and as the days lengthen with warmer periods in store we renew our joy with the coming of flowers bursting forth to reach for the sky. Then we share the pleasures of the Irish with their yearly St. Patrick's Day celebration. Perhaps the biggest event for March is the Annual Town Election and the real Town Meeting that becomes a milestone for oratory and whatnot! May we quote from the illustrious book by John Albee, "Confessions of Boyhood" with his remarks on the meeting. How timely his observations and experience was. "I have revolved schemes for town improvements a whole year and taken them into the March meeting only to have them smashed in a moment. In general at the meetings in rural districts, where there is little business to transact and the day is before them, the citizens like to hear discussion especially if the disputants get into a passion or interject a little fun. Then everybody takes a hand and the main question is so confused and lost that even the moderator cannot restate it. Party spirit rages, old feuds come to life and men remember all the ugly doings and sayings of their neighbors and are hot to pay off old scores and get even, as they say. Suddenly, at the height of the wrangle, the whole matter is dropped, peace reigns and the regular business is resumed as if nothing had happened. These tempers clear the air for a year, and everybody is in better humor having discharged his accumulation of grudges and animosities. I have heard closer speech, more sententious, more convincing and in more direct and forcible language in town meeting than from any other forum. Men are not so much ambitious of eloquence as they are to carry their point. There is often more fun, wit and sarcasm as well as logic than goes with more pretentious and popular rostrums. (Now note this bit of wisdom-) When the Town meeting is abolished freedom will have lost her humble but most powerful ally. When the town grows to a city all is lost; for our freedom and individual rights depend on direct and individual participation in public affairs. Otherwise, all is promise, averages, irresponsibility and mere chance how affairs turn out. The larger the city, the easier it is for the rascals to rule." Again may we remind you--take a look at the picture of Albee in the center library of our "Mark Twain" of Bellingham.

Perhaps You Remember

Happenings on Town Meeting day--when a rather heavy set Moderator was bothered by one of those pesky flying insects, you know, the common house fly? How, in desperation, he requested someone to rid him of that insolent fly that persisted landing on his head where a "vacant" spot was to be noted and then had the varmint exterminated with a "squish" from a well aimed swatter that left an indelible "mess" on the clean surface?

How the same gentleman became a victim of a decrepit chair that had long since served a useful purpose? It collapsed under his weight, and of all things, while the meeting was engaged in somber deliberations!

How another Moderator was about to start proceedings and as he grasped the mike stand he was suddenly knocked to the floor by a terrific jolt of high voltage from a defective amplifier? Boy, did he get a "charge"! That was one meeting that was highly electrified! Yep, things have a way of "happening" in Bellingham!

These same men had a keen rivalry and antagonism going on between them to see who could get the best of each other in an attempt to reduce their "stature" in the eyes of their fellow townsmen. Could be that it was a means whereby they could liven up the annual "get-together" town meeting! Well, anyway, one day one of them had imbibed a wee bit too much of that "hard" stuff and wrecked a pole while driving. Now everyone knows that you shouldn't drive while "lit"; well, not everyone, 'cept the guy who is under the influence! The chief of Police was queried by the rival about the unusual accident but was unable to get a confirmation that the other chap was drunk! Tight lips even then! Approaching from another angle he inquired if the pole was "drunk" and came out to meet his rival! Still silence came from the knowing Chief so that nothing could be learned that would give him an "edge" with which to degrade his friendly rival.

Even Joyce Kilmer would be proud of Bellingham! At the annual meeting in 1956 the tree Warden had an article requesting \$4500 for his department. This had not been approved by the Finance Committee and it was voted down. The heavier gentleman mentioned above rose to the occasion and demanded a reconsideration of the vote whereupon he drew on his enormous memory and recited the famous poem, "Trees" with such eloquence that stirred the folk into beautiful thoughts kindled with generous portions of good will in favor of the beleaguered Warden so that when he sat down the speaker had succeeded in reversing the vote to have the appropriation approved. It took a skilled manipulator of men's minds to sway them into voting for money to be spent on "Trees"! Well, "only God can make a tree".

Party lines were so tightly drawn years ago that during the Smith-Hoover campaign a lady from the North end was heard to comment that "That if they put up a pig to run for office why she would have to vote for it." Such was the attitude of strict adherence to the "Party" line by staunch supporters of that day! No split tickets for them, no sir!



Mary Coombes

This now famous gravestone has joined the immortals because in the late 60's a most important event occurred in Bellingham when Avon Neal and Ann Parker chanced upon her marker in the North Bellingham Cemetery during their search for unusual gravestones throughout New England and noted the special engraving on the top part. The "rubbing" soon found its way into their books and was televised by a Providence station. Interest arose and inquiries came as to where could this stone be? We were fortunate to meet them at the cemetery while they were "rubbing" and photographing it so to our right is a picture that we took soon after. "Polly" was her nickname and thus it survived while her real name was recorded in the Vital records only.

The wording on her stone is: "In memory of Miss Polly Coombe^s of Bellingham; who expired on y. 16th of Nov. 1795. in the 25th year of her age.

Reader attend, this state will soon be thine, Be thou in youthful health, or in decline, Prepare to meet they God."

Sometime ago Mr. R. Bernard Biron was in Boston along with a group of students taking in historic sites and while in a store his attention was drawn to a post card showing the top part of "Polly's" gravestone marker. This had been a reduction of the "rubbing" by Ann Parker previously and was promoted in a card in this manner. Strange how he would notice this card and that he had to go to Boston to see it! We wonder as to how far and wide this has gone after a lowly beginning in Bellingham!

And here's our famous Polly rubbing.

CHARMING POLLY

Detail rubbing of the Polly Coombes stone
No. Bellingham, Massachusetts, 1795.



DROVE TOO LONG
DRIVER SNOOZING
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT
IS NOT
AMUSING
BURMA-SHAVE



CENTER SCHOOL 1910 GRADES 7,8,9 Grammar
Teacher Eva M. Jackson



Left to right--top row-- ? , Mary Goodwin, Ruth Haskard, Bertha Arnold, Charlotte De jony, Emily Migneault, Matilda Brothers, Eva Symmes, Doris Hutton, Myrtle Spencer, Elizabeth Sears, Teacher, Eva M. Jackson, Anna Grant, Rosina McLaughlin.

Middle row--Roland Chamberlain, Ralph White, C. Peao, Chester Davis, Chester Rouse, Henry Ratti.

Front row--William Allison, Frederick Hunter, Harland Cook, George Melrose.

Graduating class--1910

Myrtle Spencer, Rosina McLaughlin, Anna Grant, Matilda Brothers, Bertha Arnold, Mary Goodwin.

The Bellingham Historical Commission wish you all a very Happy Easter season on March 26th and that there may be warm sunshine to enhance the display of dashing Easter finery at the annual trek to attend church services.